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C O N F I D E N T I A L KABUL 001144

SIPDIS

BUENOS AIRES FOR AMB WAYNE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 05/05/2019

TAGS: KDEM PGOV AF

SUBJECT: INTERIOR MINISTER ATMAR ON CANDIDATE SECURITY

REF: A. KABUL 994
¶B. KABUL 1116

Classified By: Acting DCM Alan Yu, Reason 1.5 b and d

!. (C) Interior Minister Atmar on May 3 told us he had recently reached out to the major possible presidential candidates to discuss their personal security and offer options for protection. In conversations with Abdullah, Ashraf Ghani, Ahadi, and Jalali (Ref A), Atmar offered a choice among four security packages: 1) Afghan National Civil Order Police (ANCOP), the country's best-trained and -equipped force; 2) Afghan National Police (ANP) troops of the candidates' choice; 3) integration of candidates' private security staff into the ANP; 4) special licensing for private security staff of the candidates' choice.

¶2. (C) Abdullah told Atmar he would consider the four options. (In a previous conversation, Abdullah told us he would accept ANCOP protection, option 1.) Ashraf Ghani, Atmar said, picked option 4, a special license for private security of his choice. Ahadi, who already employs private security staff, is also leaning toward option 4. Jalali has dropped out. Regarding protection for candidates' families, Ahadi's existing arrangements cover his close family as well, while family members of Abdullah and Ashraf Ghani live abroad.

¶3. (SBU) Atmar asked for USG help in identifying trainers for a short course in VIP protection for ANCOP troops. He designated General Mangal to work this issue with us; we will follow up with Mangal. Atmar expects most minor candidates will prefer the ANCOP option. As reported Ref B, the police will not provide dedicated personal security details to the bevy of provincial council candidates.

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